

Boucher Announces Major Provision of Federal Funding for Haysi Wastewater Treatment Plant (June 19, 2006)

STATEMENT OF CONGRESSMAN RICK BOUCHER

HAYSI WASTEWATER TREATMENT PLANT FUNDING ANNOUNCEMENT

June 19, 2006

9:00 AM

Haysi, Virginia

It is my pleasure to return to Haysi this morning for the purpose of announcing a provision of federal funding in the amount of \$1,588,000 for a major expansion of the Haysi Wastewater Treatment Plant. The expansion project will double the plant's capacity, improve wastewater service for approximately 450 households, businesses and schools, and allow the Dickenson County Public Service Authority to begin planning an extension of its current wastewater system so that more homes will be served.

Effective today, the U.S. Department of Agriculture through its Rural Development Agency, at my urging, is providing a low-interest federal loan in the amount of \$586,000 and a federal grant in the amount of \$1,002,000 to the Dickenson County Public Service Authority for the expansion of the Haysi Wastewater Treatment Plant.

Reliable and safe wastewater systems are essential to maintaining Southwest Virginia's excellent quality of life and critical to meeting our economic development goals for the region. For these reasons, I work actively with local governments to secure the funding necessary to construct and improve the region's wastewater infrastructure.

The Haysi Wastewater Treatment Plant, which is located on the Russell Fork River about one-half mile downstream from where we gather today, serves the Towns of Haysi and Clinchco and the Haysi Regional Jail. Approximately 450 households, businesses and schools receive wastewater treatment service from the Plant including Haysi High School, Clinchco Elementary School, and the Dickenson County Career Center.

Currently, the Haysi Wastewater Treatment Plant has a capacity of 100,000 gallons per day. The Plant is operating daily at its maximum capacity, and a much greater capacity is needed to provide wastewater service to new residents or businesses in the Haysi area.

With the funding I am announcing today, the Public Service Authority will increase the capacity of the Wastewater Treatment Plant to 200,000 gallons per day. The expansion is currently in the design phase, and the Public Service

Authority plans to complete the project by 2008.

Once the Plant expansion is completed, the Dickenson County Public Service Authority will be able to begin planning an extension of public wastewater service to the Birchleaf community, which currently does not have access to public wastewater service.

The Birchleaf wastewater extension is one of 59 projects identified as a priority in the Southwest Virginia Regional Wastewater Study. The Study, which was published in October 2005, identifies the region's wastewater needs and provides a guide for pursuing future wastewater infrastructure development. I would like to note that the Rural Development Agency provided a portion of the funding for the Study, and I will continue to work with Rural Development and other federal funding agencies to secure the funds necessary to complete these projects.

The total cost of the expansion of the Haysi Wastewater Treatment Plant is \$2,008,000. In addition to the \$1,588,000 we announce today, the Rural Development Agency provided a grant of \$15,000 for the planning and development of this project, and the Public Service Authority has provided \$5000 as a local match to the grant funds. The Public Service Authority has applied for a \$400,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to cover the remaining cost of the plant expansion. These funds are awaiting final federal approval, and I am strongly encouraging the funding agency to approve this application.

I would like to take the opportunity of these remarks to recognize a number of individuals who deserve our thanks today for the efforts they have made on behalf of this project and their commitment to improving Dickenson County's infrastructure.

I want to thank Sally Hamer, Area Director for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Agency for her excellent work to secure the funding for this project.

Gene Counts also deserves our recognition today for his dedicated work. Gene represents the Haysi area on the Dickenson County Board of Supervisors and the Dickenson County Public Service Authority. The other members of the Board of Supervisors also deserve our thanks today.

I want to thank Damon Rasnick, Chairman of the Dickenson County Public Service Authority; Ron Phillips, Executive Director of the PSA; and the excellent staff at the PSA. These dedicated individuals are responsible for the many great strides Dickenson County is making in infrastructure development.

I also want to thank the Mayor of Haysi, Norman Mullins for his outstanding work on behalf of Haysi residents.

I also want to recognize Keith Viers, Dickenson County Administrator, and Leman Kendrick, County Engineer, and Jeff Owen with the Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission for their effective work in aid of this project.

Today's announcement represents another success in our efforts to improve Southwest Virginia's water and wastewater infrastructure. Haysi residents will broadly benefit from the increased residential and economic potential afforded by this project, and I want to commend everyone here on this significant achievement.

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